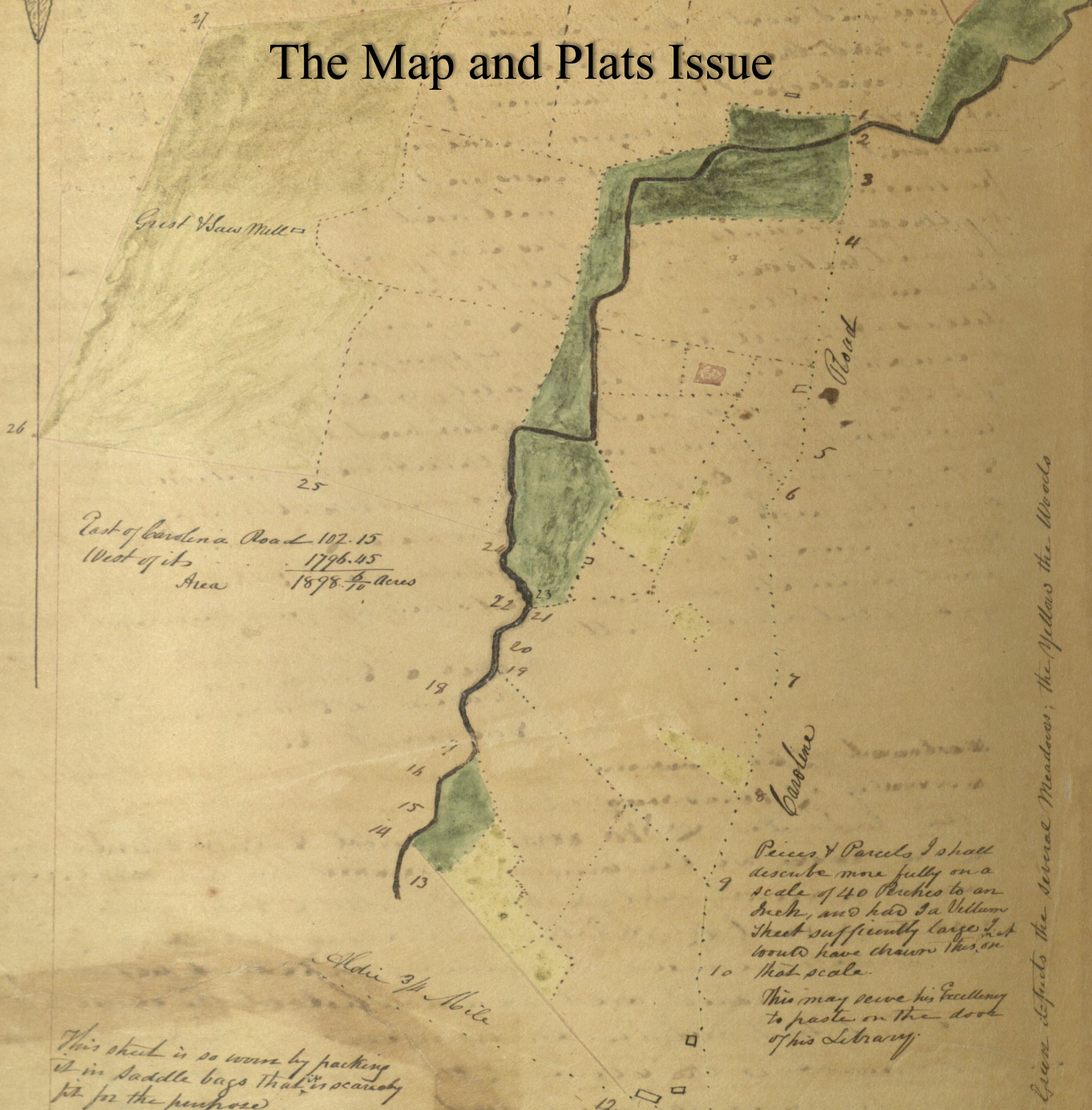


Survey of the Loudoun Farm of Genl Monroe President of the United States.
Scale 80 perches to an inch taken in May 1818

"Little Gems"

The Map and Plats Issue



Clerk of the Circuit Court - Gary M. Clemens

Historic Records

Volume 2 Issue 4 October 2017

May 25 1818

Land Records & Deed Research

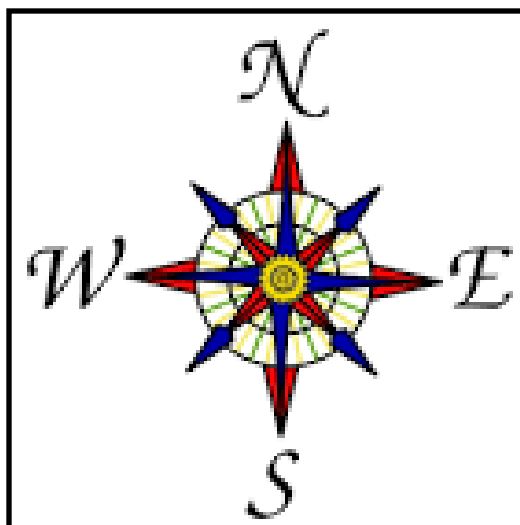
Loudoun is one of only a few counties in the Commonwealth that has records dating from its formation in 1757 when it split from Fairfax County. The Historic Records and Deed Research division includes court records from 1757-1980's and land records from 1757-present. Research can be conducted by using both in-house and online databases as well as paper indexes. Our staff can provide guidance and suggestions to start your research but **cannot provide research services or legal advice**. To prepare for your visit please review our online links to indexes and county databases which provide a starting point in your records research.

If you Visit the Archives

There is a court order that establishes court security protocols that serve the best interests of all visitors to the various courts and court-related offices in the Courts Complex. Therefore, electronic mobile devices such as cellphones with cameras, laptop computers, and electronic tablets are currently not permitted in the Courts Complex. To assist the patrons of the Historic Records/Archives research room, the Clerk's Office provides computer workstations with internet access so our patrons can review the websites of other historic records museums and historic records research organizations to assist with research needs in the Clerk's Office.

Plat of Oak Hill, 1834

In 1834 Samuel and Maria Gourverneur took out a Deed of Trust on the farm known as Oak Hill. Maria had obtained an interest in the property as part of the estate of her father President James Monroe. Recorded with the Deed of Trust is an 1818 survey of Oak Hill by Mark Hornsey. Hornsey noted on the right hand margin of the plat that "This may serve his Excellency to paste on the door of his Library." A later note in the lower left hand corner observes that "This sheet is so worn by packing it in saddle bags that it is scarcely fit for the purpose." Oak Hill is located on Route 15, south of Leesburg, and is a **private residence**.



“Little Gems”

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Clerk of the Circuit Court

Attn: Historic Records

P.O. Box 550

Leesburg, VA 20178

703-737-8775

Email

Clerk-Archives@loudoun.gov

Volunteers

John Fishback

THE MANAGER'S ORDER BOOK:

BY ERIC LARSON, HISTORIC RECORDS MANAGER

Welcome to the fall issue of "Little Gems", the map and plat edition. Our final newsletter of the year features a variety of articles on plats, an artist from Ashburn, Virginia, and John Champe. Since the last newsletter, Historic Records received a donation and conservation grant for book conservation, and an achievement award. The staff had a display table at Fairfax County's 275th anniversary and John Fishback and I had the opportunity to meet the current Lord Fairfax. Three major projects were started this summer: Indexing a 500 page plat index book, scanning Land Tax Books, and numbering the 1757-1912 Chancery records.

Historic Records' last First Friday program of the year is on October 6, 2017, from 6-8:30PM at the 1894 courthouse. *Rods, Links and Poles: Historic Maps and Plats in the Court Historic Records* will feature a dozen plats and maps including the 1759 Plan of Leesburg. Loudoun County's Department of Mapping and Geographic Information and The Thomas Balch Library will also be participating in the event.

Conservation Donation and Grant



In June the Clerk of the Circuit Court received \$845 from the Ketocin Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. This generous donation conserved the 1780-1782 Rough Minute Book which includes the names of hundreds of county residents who served or supplied goods and services to the Continental Army.

The Library of Virginia awarded the clerk's office a \$9,485 grant to conserve: 1784-1785 Deed Book O, 1784-1785 Rough Minute Book, 1811-1827 Militia Book and 1853-1859 Birth Register. Conservators will deacidify and repair the books' pages. Then the pages will be encapsulated in polyester pockets and bound in a post binder.

Achievement Award



The Historic Records and Deed Research Division won the 2017 [Virginia Association of Counties](#) Achievement Award for public programing. This award was for building public awareness of Loudoun's historic court records through events, partnerships, website enhancements, newsletters and brochures. Seventy-nine counties submitted applications and seventeen were selected to receive this prestigious award. Loudoun's Department of Animal Services also won an achievement award for their program: The Year of the Cat.

Land Records Upgrade

The Clerk of the Circuit Court upgraded their Land Records System in July. The upgraded system includes all deeds from 1757-present and wills 1757-1874 and 1885-present. The remaining will books are scanned and will be uploaded in the near future. The Land Records Database is available for free in the Historic Records Division. Access to the database online is available only with a subscription.

"Little Gem": A Look at Criminal Case 1938-029 by: Sarah Markel

This month's edition of Little Gems is all about plats and maps. Most people think that plats can only be found in the deed books or plat cabinets. When in fact, plats can be found in the least expected places such as, Road Cases, Criminal Cases, and even Chancery Suits. When working with customers we always tell them to think outside the box when looking for genealogy links. We first direct customers to our on-line indexes and tell them to do a name search in all indexes as you never know if someone in the family was indentured, had a judgement, or maybe a chancery suit. For example a customer may find a family name in our criminal index. The associated file may tell them where the person was living, what type of car they drove, or give some other clue into their life.

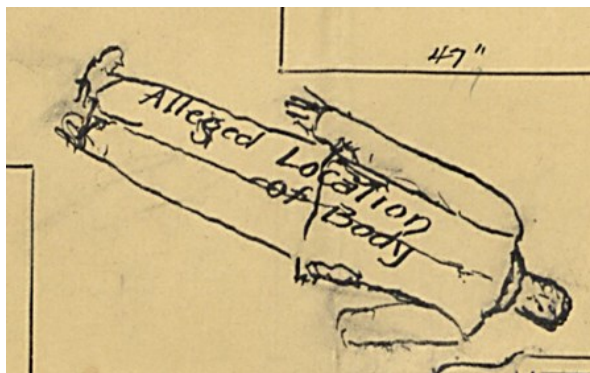
Below is an example of a house plat showing the layout of the house and the alleged location of a body. This case is *Loudoun County-Misc Papers-Criminal 1938-029, Commonwealth v. Redman, Charles Noble*. While some of the Criminal records are very detailed this file contains only a plat, summons papers, and the indictment. Although there is not much in the file by way of paper, there are still a few clues. In the order books we find that Mr. Redman is found guilty of the murder and sentenced to seven years in the penitentiary for the murder of Mr. Clinedinst.

Written on the bottom of the plat is: "Floor Plan of Kitchen of 'The H.C. Clinedinst Residence, Showing Positions of Principal Pieces of furniture. April 9, 1938.'" This tells the viewer that Mr. Clinedinst was murdered in his home. The plat also shows that he owned a shotgun and that it was leaning against a cupboard by the front door. This makes me wonder if Mr. Clinedinst was surprised by Mr. Redman, or perhaps knew him and allowed him in the house not fearing for his own safety.

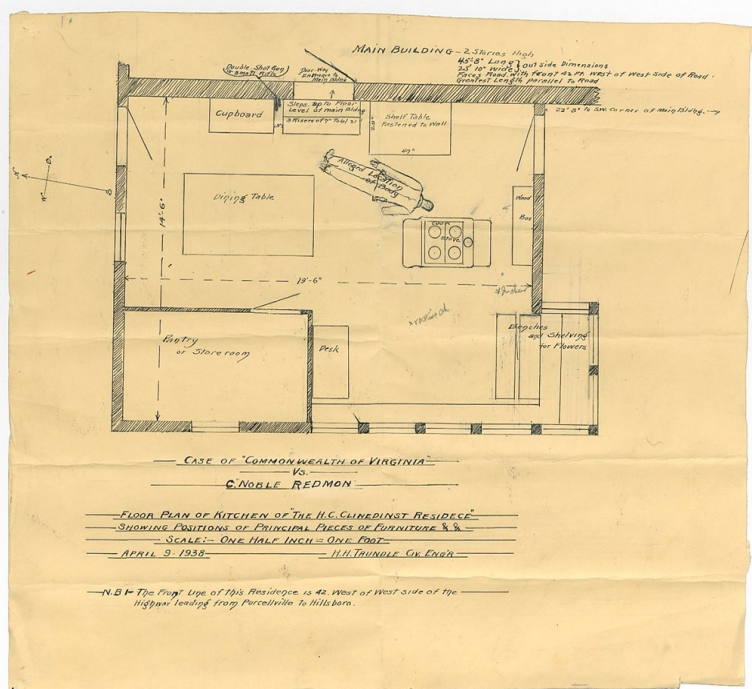
The plat not only shows the dimensions of the house and the furniture inside, but it gives us a rough idea of where it is. "The front line of this residence is 42 feet west of west side of the highway leading from Purcellville to Hillsboro." Knowing this, a customer could look through the deed books and see if Mr. Clinedinst is listed as owning property in this area.

Just like any murder mystery we may not learn all of the facts of a case. Leaving us to wonder what happened to Mr. Clinedinst's hand? Or, why was he drawn twice the size of the cook stove? Who knows maybe one day we will find the answers in an obscure newspaper. Only time and research will tell.

Update!! We have had a newspaper sighting. One of my colleagues was looking through the microfilm at Thomas Balch Library, and found an article from, the Loudoun Times Mirror, on this case. The writer states that the two men were acquaintances and that they were both sitting at the table drinking and talking. At some point the discussion became heated and Mr. Redman stood and shot Mr. Clinedinst in the head killing him instantly. There were two other people in the house that night, Mrs. Clinedinst and her sister Ms. Rose Love. Mr. Redman was arrested near his house and was reportedly still drinking at the time of his arrest. Mr. Clinedinst was laid to rest in the Hillsboro Cemetery.



Scan of plat from Criminal Case 1938-029 Commonwealth v. Redman, Charles Noble

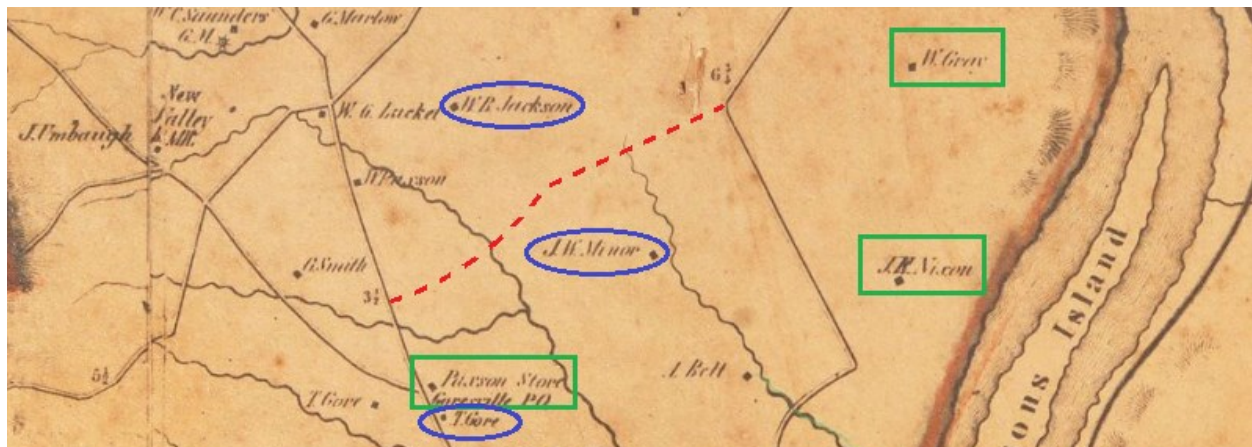


Landscape Time Capsules: Plats Found in the Road Case Collections

By Alyssa Fisher

On December 13, 1853, a Court in Loudoun County ordered the review of a road proposed by John E. Nixon, Cornelius W. Paxson, and William S. Gray. This road, if approved, would connect the Leesburg and Point of Rocks Road to Hawling's Ferry Road. Alfred C. Belt, Daniel Shreve, and Cephas Hempstone, served as road viewers in the case and analyzed the proposal to determine if a public road would be useful in that location. The viewers submitted their report to the Court on January 9, 1854, along with plats of the area that displayed the proposed route and suggested improvements. These plats are just a few examples of the numerous plats which can be found within the Road Case Collection. Road Case plats serve as evidence of landmarks, roadways, and structures that have changed significantly over time.¹

Belt, Shreve, and Hempstone reported that the proposed new road would be good for the area stating, “there is no public road at present & the neighborhood is compelled to pass through private avenues leading to their post office, which are liable to be closed at the discretion of those through whose land these private passways lead.” Additionally, those who lived in the area, but owned wood lots on Catoctin Mountain to the west, would have a better route for transporting harvested wood back to their homes. The new route would “accommodate all the travelling public west of the Catoctin Mountain in passing through Lareu Town towards Spink’s Ferry,” and could “be a great consideration to Grazers & Cattle dealers that cross the Potomac River at Spink’s Ferry saving some considerable distance.” The plats show that the new road would create a shortcut to the nearest store and post office, and it could provide a faster route west to the Catoctin Mountain. It is easy to see how the petitioners could benefit from this proposed road as well. C.W. Paxson owned and operated the nearest store and post office, while Nixon and Gray both lived along Hawling's Ferry Road.²



The proposed road shown on a portion of the Yardley Taylor Map from 1853. The red dotted line shows the proposed new road. Green rectangles mark the petitioners for the road. Blue ovals mark the individuals whose land would be affected by the new road. Yardley-Taylor Map of Loudoun County, *The History of Loudoun County, Virginia*, www.loudounhistory.org/map-yardley-taylor-1854.htm (accessed September 28, 2017).

While the viewers highly recommended the opening of a new public road, they did suggest a slight change in route. The proposed road passed through swamp land which could cause problems in construction and maintenance. The viewers suggested another path which would provide the same access but on better land. The plat they submitted with their report reflected the two opposing routes; the originally proposed route drawn in black solid lines, and the revised route in dotted lines. Ultimately, by October 9, 1854 the Court approved the public road, “adopting the dotted line.” The road constructed is the extension of Spink’s Ferry Road which opens to Route 15 today.³

¹ RR 1854-005, Nixon, John E. and Others, Road Case Collection, Loudoun County Clerk’s Office.

² RR 1854-005.

³ RR 1854-005; Loudoun County Minute Book Vol. 14, page 43.



Close-up from the road case plat RR 1854-005 that includes the proposed route in a black solid line, the proposed alternate route in a dotted line, and the proposed extension leading to Lareu Town.

The plats found in this road case not only provide a visual for the proposed roadway, but also include a detailed image of the surrounding space spanning from Catoclin Mountain to the Potomac River. While construction of the new road only affected three particular landowners, William B. Jackson, Captain Tilghman Gore, and John W. Minor, most of the names of landowners in the area appear on the plat. Several other features are listed as well, including private roads, landmarks like "the Big Woods," Lareu Town, Paxson's Store, and the Goresville Post Office. Lareu Town appears on the map at the base of Catoclin Mountain. The only modern town in

that vicinity today is Stumptown. Upon further research, the deed for what is now the Bethel United Methodist Church, deeded to church trustees in 1868 by Noble S. Braden, describes "a certain lot of land in Lareu (or Stumptown) in the County & State aforesaid near the Eastern base of the Catoclin Mountain on the south side of the main road leading from Waterford to Noland's Ferry." The town may have been named for Isaac Larowe (Lareu), who owned a large amount of land in the area in the early 1800s. He sold several small parcels to individuals in the 1810s, which may have resulted in the development of a small town.⁴

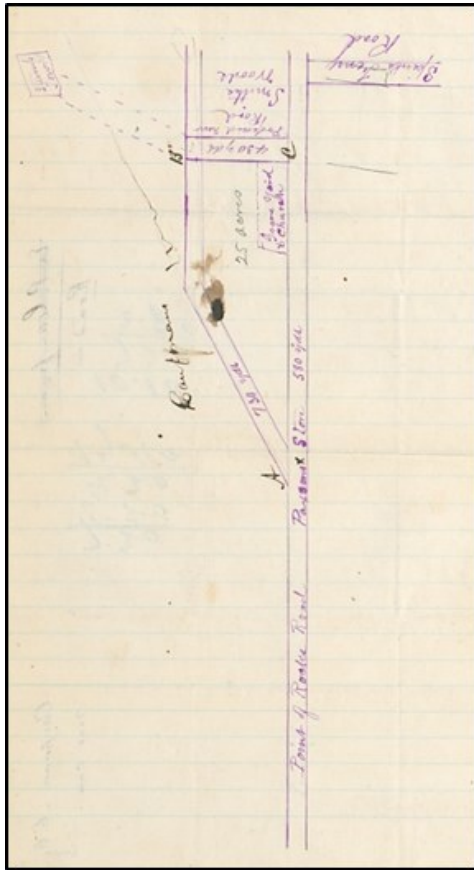
The plat attached to the report references a proposed extension from the Leesburg and Point of Rocks Road to Lareu Town. The viewers explained that the extension in 1854 "is now and has been a public passway for an indefinite period." A larger plat submitted with the reviewers' report shows a road labeled the "Road to Catoclin Mountain" which apparently led directly to Paxson's Store. The Yardley Taylor Map shows this road leading to the store, but modern maps show a different road, which is now an extension of New Valley Church Road. A road case from 1869 provides an explanation for this change. Petitioners requested a road be established to provide better access to a new church built north of Paxson's Store. A plat included in the road case indicates the location of the old road, the new road, and the church. Today, the old road leading directly to Paxson's store no longer exists, and evidence of it has faded away. Using the Aerial Archive tool on the Loudoun County Mapping GIS website provides an image of the area from 1937 which shows a faded road bed that fits the location of the old road. Using the measuring tools on the same website, the measurement of the old road bed found on the 1937 image matches the measurements found on the plat in the road case from 1869.⁵



A close-up of the Paxson's Store and old road that led to Catoclin Mountain from a plat in road case RR 1854-005

⁴ RR 1854-005; Loudoun County Deed Book 5X, p. 452-453; Loudoun County Deed Book W, p. 94-95; Loudoun County Deed Book 2P, p. 143-145; Loudoun County Deed Book 2Q, p. 318-319; Loudoun County Deed Book 2S, p. 4-5; Loudoun County Deed Book 2S, p. 494-495; Loudoun County Deed Book 2T, p. 11-13; Loudoun County Deed Book 2T, p. 46-47; Loudoun County Deed Book 2T, p. 79-81; Loudoun County Deed Book 2T, p. 213; Loudoun County Deed Book 2U, p. 286.

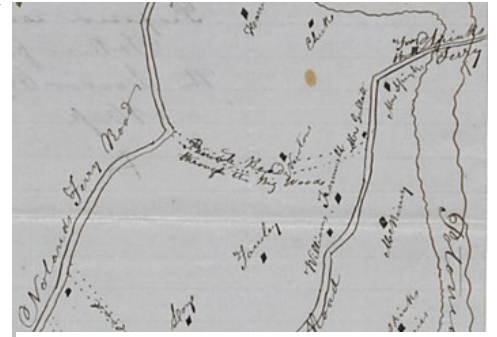
⁵ RR 1854-005; RR 1869-003, Cauffman, Edward G., Road Case Collection, Loudoun County Clerk's Office; Loudoun County Mapping GIS, Loudoun County Mapping and Geographic Information, <https://logis.loudoun.gov/weblogis/> (accessed September 28, 2017).



Plat from road case RR1869-003 with old road to the left leading to Paxson's Store, and the new road leading to the church.



Another interesting feature found on one of the plats in the 1854 road case is a private road running through the "Big Woods." While the road case does not discuss much about the Big Woods, another road case over twenty years later describes the area. In 1877, petitioners requested a public road between Noland's Ferry Road and Spink's Ferry Road that would run "through the section of the County, known as the 'Big Woods.'" The petitioners explained, "there has been several roads in use through this section for very many years, but no one seems to have been established or accepted as a public road." Additionally, the petitioners remarked that these roads "have been closed and the only outlet now is wellnigh impassable being a part of the way through a lane not more than fifteen feet in width and so cut up as to be dangerous for travel." The many routes used by residents of this neighborhood may have been the private roads seen on the 1854 road case plats that crossed through the Big Woods, or perhaps even some of the private routes that passed through William B. Jackson's land. The Court approved the road in 1878 and today is known as Lost Corner Road.⁶



Plat from RR 1854-005 showing the private road that ran through the Big Woods

While plats in road cases provide evidence of requested roadways throughout time, they also display landmarks, villages, and residential and commercial structures. Road cases can be used together to provide a fuller history of an area describing the development and use of certain regions. Road case plats act as time capsules for specific areas, which with further research, can provide a detailed view of changes that took place within that community.

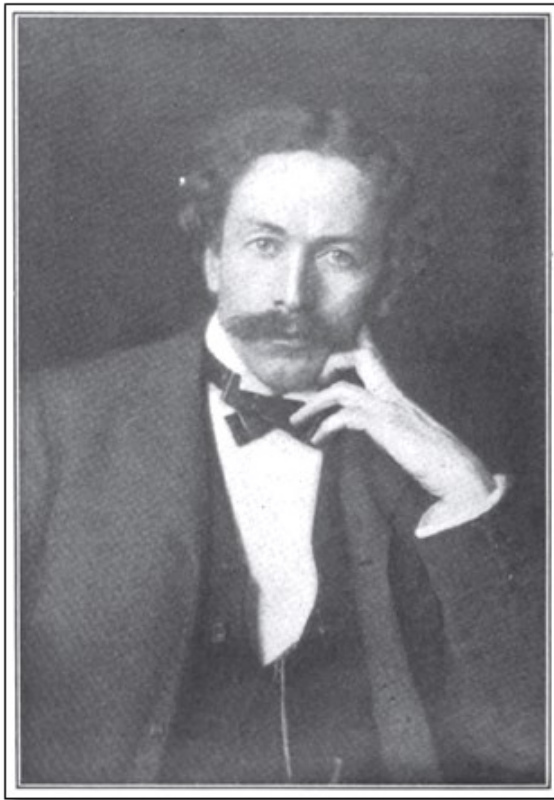
Aerial view from 1937. The red arrow indicates where the old road bed may have been. The green star shows the general location of Paxson's Store, while the blue star shows the location of the church.

Image from Loudoun County Mapping GIS, courtesy of Loudoun County Mapping & Geographic Information

⁶ RR 1854-005; RP1878-001, Barnhouse, Randolph, Road Case Collection, Loudoun County Clerk's Office.

Gleanings from a Death Certificate

By Alyssa Fisher



Portrait of J.M. Gleeson featured in
"The Art Interchange" Monthly Magazine
Volumes L and LI, 1903, 134.

An updated index for Death Certificates from 1912 – 1917 is currently uploaded to the Historic Records website. Death certificates from this time period can provide detailed information about the deceased individual including the place, date, and cause of death, birth date and place of birth, name of parents, place of burial, and often the deceased individual's occupation. According to the death certificates, the majority of deceased individuals from Loudoun County worked as farmers, laborers, and housekeepers. Other occupations included railroad workers, house painters, teachers, ministers, bankers, lawyers, doctors, postmasters, coach makers, merchants, and even a piano tuner. Out of the 1,660 certificates in the collection, only one individual, Joseph Michael Gleeson, worked as an artist.

Joseph Michael Gleeson was born on February 8, 1861 in Dracut, Massachusetts to Jeremiah Gleeson and Kate Matherson Gleeson. J.M. Gleeson spent his childhood in Rhode Island where his family ran a farm. Choosing to pursue a different career, he travelled to Munich in 1885 to study art, and traveled to other parts of Europe including France and Italy to continue his studies. While in Paris, he studied at the Julian School, where he was taught by many admired artists of the late nineteenth century. Gleeson found work as an illustrator for "artist's editions," of previously non-illustrated published books. These included Thomas Carlyle's *The French Revolution: A History* from 1893, and *A Short History of Our Own Times from the Accession of Queen Victoria to the General*

Election of 1880, written by Justin McCarthy, M.P. and published also in 1893. Gleeson's illustrations included figural drawings of prominent people, and sketches of structures important to the narrative.¹

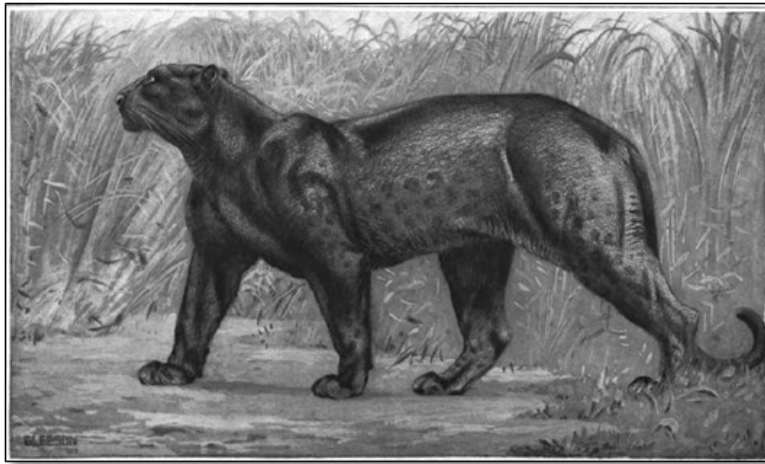
Around 1898, Gleeson returned to the United States and lived in Washington D.C. He continued to create illustrations for publications including drawings found in *The World of the Great Forest* written by Paul Du Chaillu, and published in 1901. Gleeson found inspiration for his artwork at the U.S. National Zoological Park (National Zoo). On September 3, 1902, the National Zoo received an adult female thylacine with her three pups. A thylacine, now an extinct species, originated from Australia. Often called a Tasmanian tiger, or Tasmanian wolf because of its coloration and body shape, the thylacine was a marsupial, carnivore, and the only species of family Thylacinidae to exist in modern times until its extinction in 1936. Gleeson made sketches of the animals within a few days, and created a historical painting of the creatures, which is the only known life-portrait of a thylacine family where one of the pups is in the mother's pouch.²

1 Joseph Michael Gleeson 94.14, Loudoun County Death Certificates 1912-1917, Loudoun County Clerk's Office; "Joseph Michael Gleeson," www.aksart.com/artist_bio/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson/71725/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson.aspx# (accessed August 25, 2017); "An American Animal Painter," *The Art Interchange Monthly Magazine* L & LI (1903): 134-139; Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution: A History* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1893); Justin McCarthy, M.P. *A Short History of Our Own Times from the Accession of Queen Victoria to the General Election of 1880* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1893).

2 "An American Animal Painter," *The Art Interchange Monthly Magazine*, L & LI (1903): 134-139; "Joseph Michael Gleeson," www.aksart.com/artist_bio/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson/71725/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson.aspx# (accessed August 25, 2017); Paul Du Chaillu, *The World of the Great Forest* (London: John Murray, 1901); Cameron R. Campbell, *The Thylacine Museum*, www.naturalworlds.org/thylacine/ (accessed August 28, 2017).

J.M. Gleeson married Florence Helene Stebbins in 1902, and frequented New York where he illustrated several books, showed work at exhibitions, and contributed to several journals and magazines. Gleeson's interest for animal artwork continued however, as he traveled to Africa, visited various European zoos, and explored the forests of North America. By 1903, *The Art Interchange*, a monthly New York magazine, included a feature stating “Mr. Gleeson, though still a young man, has spent years in constant study, uninterrupted hard work and travel for the acquisition of needed experience, and his work shows that he will, in a few years, rise to eminence as an animal painter.” By 1905, *The Artists Year Book* published by the Art League Publishing Association in Chicago listed Gleeson's work as “animal life in oils and illustrations,” describing Gleeson as the “author of many short stories on animal life in current magazines.”³

One of Gleeson's stories found in *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* is titled “Three Strange Animals,” in which Gleeson described in detail the appearance, behavior, and other facts about the maned wolf, black leopard, and the serval (a wildcat of Africa). Gleeson's narrative accompanied drawings of the species he completed while he observed the animals at various zoos. His articles and his drawings portrayed more than mere observations of the animals, but a reverence for animal life. Gleeson's notes included recognition of the number of species quickly becoming extinct in his own time. Gleeson wrote, “These things,



“The Black Leopard (Antwerp Zoo) by J.M. Gleeson from *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, Vol. LXIV, New Series, Vol. XLII, May, 1902 to October, 1902.



J.M. Gleeson's painting of the Thylacine mother and her three cubs at the National Zoo in Washington D.C. (The third pup is in the mother's pouch) Courtesy of: Cameron R. Campbell. “The Thylacine in Art: Natural History Illustration,” *The Thylacine Museum*, http://www.naturalworlds.org/thylacine/art/illustration/image_13.htm (Accessed August 28, 2017).

however, we shall never see, for animal life is disappearing as rapidly in South America as in our own country, and the *Canis jubatus* will in all probability soon become in very fact a name only.” Speaking of the survival of the serval, Gleeson wrote, “It is not generally looked upon as a handsome or otherwise interesting animal, which is of course very good fortune for the cat, for it has thus escaped the slaughter which is the fate of all that is beautiful in the animal kingdom.” Gleeson's recognition of the destruction of animal species may have been a contributing factor to his continued in-depth study and illustration of wildlife. Perhaps he felt as an illustrator, he could preserve through his drawings that which was lost, or would soon become lost and forgotten.⁴

3 “An American Animal Painter,” *The Art Interchange Monthly Magazine*. L & LI (1903): 134-139; “Joseph Michael Gleeson,” www.aksart.com/artist_bio/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson/71725/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson.aspx# (accessed August 25, 2017); Arthur Nicholas Hosking, *The Artists Year Book* (Chicago: The Art League Publishing Association, 1905).

4 J.M. Gleeson, “Three Strange Animals,” *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* LXIV & XLII (May 1902 to October 1902): 746-751.

The article about Gleeson in *The Art Interchange* stated, "An ardent admirer of Kipling, he finds an unlimited wealth of material in the author's stories for illustrative and decorative purposes." Gleeson, even in his own writing, referenced Kipling's work, admiring Kipling for his use of the black leopard "to play an important role in his splendid jungle romance." Gleeson found inspiration from Kipling's words and imagery, particularly from "The Jungle Stories," and had previously completed a series of paintings based on Kipling's work. Gleeson's "Mowgli in the Jungle: An Interpretation of Kipling's Jungle Book" appeared in the December 1906 edition of *The Outing Magazine*, consisting of four full page illustrations of scenes from the book, including excerpts and two smaller illustrations of Mowgli. Gleeson's most notable book illustrations are those found in Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories*. While originally published in 1902 with illustrations by Kipling himself, a later "extra illustrated" edition of the book included the drawings of Joseph M. Gleeson in 1912.⁵



Illustration by Gleeson for Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories* published by Doubleday, Page & Co., 1912.



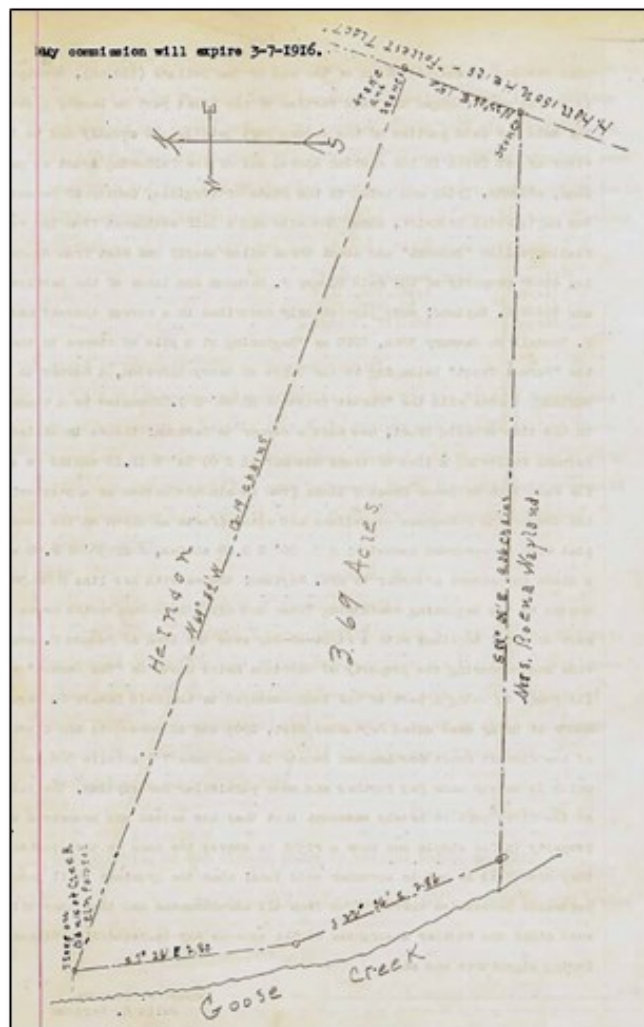
Illustration from *At the Sign of the Fox* by J.M. Gleeson

Throughout J.M. Gleeson's career he exhibited his work at the National Academy of Design in 1895, and was listed in the *Catalogue of the Fifteenth Annual Exhibition of The Architectural League of New York* in 1900. He was also a member of the Society of Illustrators, the St. Louis Brush and Pencil Club, the Chicago Society of Etchers, and the Salmagundi Club, an artist club established in 1871 that emphasized a realist artistic style. He and his wife seemed to have similar interests as they worked together on an article titled "Good Housekeeping in the Wilderness," featured in *The Outlook* in 1907, written by Florence Stebbins Gleeson and illustrated by her husband. Gleeson even illustrated a romance novel titled *At the Sign of the Fox*, by Mabel Osgood Wright. His career continued until Gleeson's death on September 21, 1917 at the age of 56. Gleeson's obituary found in the *New York Times* on September 26, 1917 explained that "after a lingering illness," Gleeson died "at his summer home, Ashburn, VA." Prior to his death, J.M. Gleeson and his wife Florence purchased a parcel of land in February of 1915, which consisted of a little less than 3.7 acres in Loudoun County. The property was described as "about one mile and a half south-west from the railroad station called "Belmont" and about three miles nearly due west from Ashburn." A survey described the lot

⁵ "An American Animal Painter," *The Art Interchange Monthly Magazine*. L & LI (1903): 134-139; J.M. Gleeson, "Mowgli in the Jungle: An Interpretation of Kipling's Jungle Book," *The Outing Magazine*, XLIX (October, 1906 – March, 1907): 289-298; Rudyard Kipling, *Just So Stories* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1912).

as being bounded by property known as “The Forest,” owned by the Harrison heirs, and included a plat showing the property situated on the east side of Goose Creek.⁶

Many people from cities like Washington D.C. chose to stay in summer homes in the country. Several of Loudoun’s towns and villages served in this capacity at the turn of the twentieth century. The Census from 1910 recorded Gleeson residing in New York, probably because he predominantly worked there. His wife however, co-managed a café in Washington D.C. and lived on 19th Street which happened to lead directly to the National Zoo. Gleeson did enjoy Washington D.C. and perhaps he and his wife chose a summer home that would provide him access to the National Zoo, and her access to her café. The description of Gleeson’s property specified access to the railroad station at Belmont which in turn could have connected him to Washington D.C. It is also perhaps intentional on Gleeson’s part to purchase a property along a creek, and bounded by a property known as “The Forest,” since he had a lifelong enjoyment of visiting woods, and natural landscapes. It is unclear as to why Gleeson specifically chose to purchase a summer property in Ashburn, though it is easy to understand why he chose to spend his final days in his summer home where he could be surrounded by nature. While much of Ashburn has been developed since Gleeson’s death, his wife maintained ownership of the property until her death in 1953. Several different people and organizations have owned the property through the years, but today it still remains the same size and may contain some of the original structures.⁷



Plat of property J.M. Gleeson and his wife purchased in 1915 from Deed Book 8W, page 378, Loudoun County Clerk’s Office

- 6 Arthur Nicholas Hosking, *The Artists Year Book* (Chicago: The Art League Publishing Association, 1905); “Joseph Michael Gleeson,” www.aksart.com/artist_bio/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson/71725/Joseph_Michael_Gleeson.aspx# (accessed August 25, 2017); “Salmagundi Club,” www.aksart.com/art/glossary/S (accessed August 25, 2017); “Joseph Michael Gleeson,” www.artnet.com/artists/joseph-michael-gleeson/biography (accessed August 25, 2017); Joseph Lauber, *Catalogue of the Fifteenth Annual Exhibition of The Architectural League of New York* (New York: The Architectural League of New York (New York: Niccol & Roy Co., 1900): 18, 27, 35, 39; Florence Stebbins Gleeson, “Good Housekeeping in the Wilderness,” *The Outlook* LXXXVI (May-August, 1907): 195-202; Mabel Osgood Wright, *At the Sign of the Fox* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1905); Joseph Michael Gleeson 94.14, Loudoun County Death Certificates 1912-1917, Loudoun County Clerk’s Office; “Died,” *The New York Times*, September 26, 1917, p. 13, in ProQuest Historical Newspapers (accessed August 25, 2017); “Herndon &c. to Gleeson &c. B&S,” Deed Book 8W, 376-378, Loudoun County Clerk’s Office.
- 7 1910 U.S. Census, Washington City, District of Columbia, Precinct 10, Population Schedule, p.5749, dwelling 11, family 12, Florence S. Gleeson, digital image, Ancestry.com, www.ancestrylibrary.com, (accessed August 28, 2017); 1910 U.S. Census, Borough of Manhattan, New York City, Population Schedule, p. 7579, dwelling 76, family 170, Joseph M. Gleeson, digital image, Ancestry.com, www.ancestrylibrary.com (accessed August 28, 2017); Rand McNally and Company, Washington D.C., Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1910, Map, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/87691460/> (accessed October 5, 2017); Will of Florence Stebbins Gleeson, 1953, Will Book 4D, 380-385, Loudoun County Clerk’s Office.

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Can you find these words in the puzzle above?

ACRES
ALDIE
ASHBURN
BOUNDS
CHAINS
CHAMPE
CREEKS
DEEDS
FEET
GLEESON

HILLSBORO
HOUGH
LEESBURG
LINKS
LUCKETTS
METES
MINOR
NIXON
PAXSON
PERCH

PLATS
POLES
PURCELLVILLE
ROAD
RODS
STUMPTOWN
SURVEY
TOWNS
TURNPIKES
WATERFORD

1759 Plan of Leesburg and Virginia's Long Road to Town Settlements By: Eric Larson

The founding of George Town (Leesburg) in 1758 was the product of nearly 150 years of colonial and royal efforts to develop and then persuade Virginia's colonists that towns served in their best interest. The battle was not only a governmental process on each side of the Atlantic, but a struggle to win the hearts and minds of the colonists. So why did it take so long, and why did legislative acts, royal and private incentives have little effect in enticing Virginia's colonists to create towns, villages and hamlets in Virginia's Tidewater and backcountry (Image 1)? To answer this question requires examining many factors to understand why the great expansion and acceptance of towns took well over a century to occur.

Barriers to Town Development 1607-1700

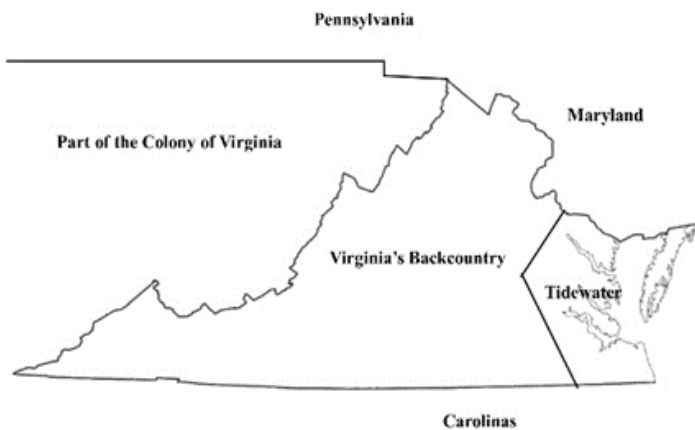


Image One, Virginia's Backcountry Late 17th Century

The difficulty of town formation in 17th and 18th century Virginia was impacted by many characteristics. First, the economies of the southern colonies were decentralized and most communities revolved around plantations. Second, England's mercantile policy forbade the colonies from establishing industry which limited the number of skilled tradesmen into the colonies. Third, many large plantation owners feared losing their economic authority to urban development. Fourth, the English colonies dreaded reprisals from Native Americans and the French and Spanish colonies. Lastly, and probably the most significant obstacle Virginia confronted was changing the mentality of many colonists who considered urban development a contradiction to the idea of owning land and being independent.¹

By the mid-17th century, some British and colonial policymakers promoted plans for urban development and lobbied Parliament and the Crown to relax the restrictive mercantile policy that limited immigration of skilled craftsman into the colonies. Colonial leaders in the Carolinas, for example, argued that without towns, large plantations would neither be secured or civilized.³ In Virginia, religious supporters of town development asserted that “heathens like in the cities”, would be won to Christianity by living among a pious population.

*“Transplanted into the enclosed gardens of God and becoming fruitful and useful trees of righteousness; which is the promised happiness and benefit of well ordered schooles, in governed Towns.”*³

Beginning in the 1680s, Virginia's General Assembly passed legislation to encourage town formation. The Assembly's acts included tax exemptions for tradesmen who were willing to settle for five years. These acts established new port towns along the Tidewater rivers, but very few ships and colonists used them due to the towns lack of shipping facilities and infrastructure. By the early 18th century, no further attempts were made by the House of Burgesses to pass legislation concerning towns. One Virginian wrote in 1724, “neither the interest nor the inclinations of the Virginians induce them to cohabit in towns.”⁴

1 Hendricks, Christopher E., *The Backcountry Towns of Colonial Virginia*, Univ. Tennessee Press, 2006, 140

2 Ibid.,3

3 Ibid.,3

4 Ibid, 6

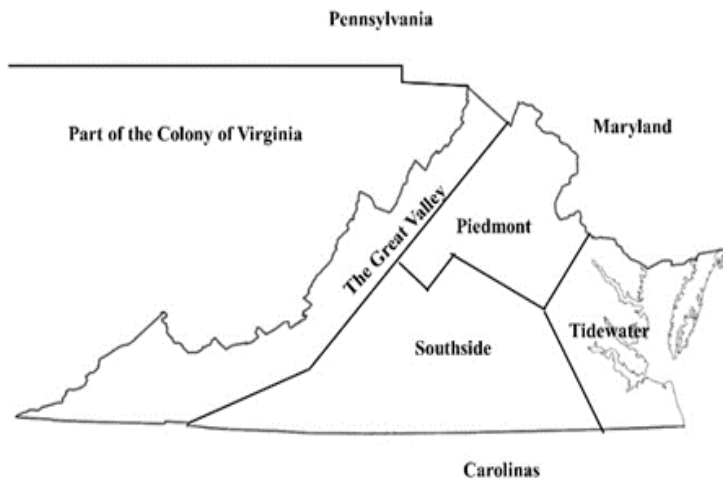


Image Two, Virginia's Piedmont and The Great Valley, Early 18th Century

In the early 1700s, the focus of town development shifted from Tidewater Virginia, to Virginia's Piedmont and Great Valley (Image 2). Wealthy Tidewater planters viewed the backcountry of Virginia as a land of great economic potential, since they had exhausted the soil and woodlands of Tidewater lands. William Byrd II described Virginia's backcountry as "Eden."⁵ Virginia's Governor Spotswood (1710-1722) labored throughout his years as governor to promote expansion outside of Tidewater. The 1722 Treaty of Albany drafted by Spotswood worked best to encourage settlement outside of Tidewater. The treaty set the Blue Ridge Mountains as a demarcation line between Virginia and the Iroquois Five Nations which opened the backcountry to settlements in the 1730s.

Piedmont, Loudoun and Leesburg 1722-1757

The formation of Loudoun County and the Town of Leesburg began with the backcountry settlements of the Northern Neck (Image 3). The Northern Neck was a tract of land consisting of 5,282,000 acres that stretched from the Chesapeake Bay up the Rappahannock River through present-day Northern Virginia and West Virginia.⁶ The Northern Neck was granted to John and Thomas Culpeper from King Charles II in 1649. The grant passed to the 5th Lord of Fairfax whose wife, Catherine, was the daughter of Thomas Culpeper. In 1736 Thomas, the 6th Lord Fairfax took over all land management from his mother. He left England and traveled to Virginia, and spent three years exploring and mapping his family's land. Fairfax finally settled on his estate at Greenway Court in the Shenandoah Valley in 1748, and started issuing 99-year leases in the Northern Neck.

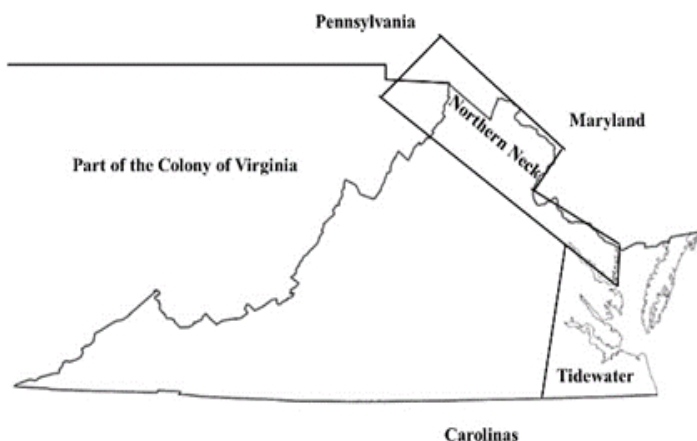


Image Three, Virginia's Northern Neck, Early 18th Century

In the 1730s, settlers from the northern English colonies started crossing the Potomac River into the Colony of Virginia around the current towns of Shepherdstown, and Harpers Ferry, West Virginia and Williamsport, Maryland. Many of these settlers had just recently arrived in the American colonies from the poorer sections of Ireland, Scotland and Germany. The settlers brought many diversities such as, language, culture and religion, which made a lasting impact on the counties and towns of the Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley. Very few of these settlers crossing into Virginia had any legal claims to the land they settled. To control illegal settlements, owners of these great tracts of land increasingly relied on the Tidewater

gentry to manage their properties, or gave them the opportunity to purchase or lease land.

⁵ Ibid., 6

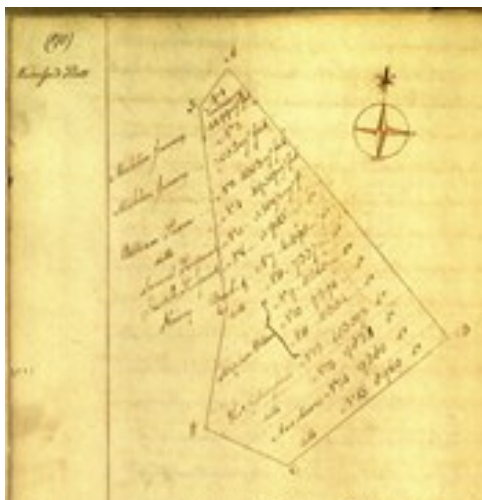
⁶The surveying and governing the Northern Neck is a convoluted history. The Library of Virginia has an excellent webpage that details the history of Fairfax's land grant @ <http://www.lva.virginia.gov/public/guides/opac/lonnabout.htm#surveys>.

The first towns to appear in the Northern Neck and Shenandoah Valley were usually the county seats of the newly-chartered counties. The Virginia General Assembly specified that all towns had to be “well suited for trade.”⁷ The founders of the first generation of backcountry towns (1730s-1744) neither lived nor set foot in them. With no personal ties, some of towns failed in variety of ways and then disappeared altogether. In the second generation (1744-1776) many of the towns were created by individuals who lived and had economic roots in the community.⁸ By 1770, more than seventeen new towns emerged in Virginia’s backcountry from Berkley Springs, West Virginia to Charlottesville, Virginia.

Backcountry Surveyors, Towns and Designs

The surveyors that laid out these towns and large land grants wielded considerable power in 18th century Virginia. Many surveyors owned thousands of acres and had capital invested in the backcountry. Although surveyors were required to follow established standards, many did not. The economic gain, favoritism, and revenge against enemies was so great it often influenced the layout of a parcel of land. For example, irregular shaped parcels typically indicated that a surveyor was looking out for himself, a client, or keeping fertile land, roads and waterways out of the hands of his competitor.

Most backcountry towns were settled along cultural, religious and kinship lines and were generally located along major waterways and roads. The towns’ designs were influenced by colonists who had some basic knowledge of urban layouts from England, France and Germany. To layout new towns, land developers and surveyors used the grid plan of rectangular squares where the streets ran at right angles from each other. Not all towns had a layout prior to settlement, for example Waterford. Some towns, however, modified the grid plan like Leesburg.



Waterford

Milltown (Renamed Waterford in 1750) was one of the earliest towns in Piedmont Virginia. The town was established in the 1730s without a prior design to guide the town’s development. Milltown developed along the lay of the land and most of the founders belonged to the Society of Friends. Waterford had all the characteristics of a town, tradesmen, a mill and even a town government managed by Quakers from the Society of Friends’ Meeting House. However, Waterford never received or requested an official charter during the colonial period.⁹

Leesburg

George Town (Leesburg), unlike Waterford, was a planned community that incorporated the land and existing roads into its layout. It also differed from Waterford because its founder Nicholas Minor saw the future town as an economic and government center for the new county of Loudoun. Minor was a shrewd and enterprising 18th century land developer who saw the possibility of a new county being formed out of Fairfax County.¹⁰ In 1755, Minor purchased 345 acres from Francis Awbrey on the land where two roads intersected. The land he purchased was part of Awbrey’s 4,000-acre land grant he received from the 6th Lord Fairfax in 1730.

7 Ibid., 15 Selection of the county seat often generated corruption among land owners and the county justices who wanted to locate the county seat on their property.

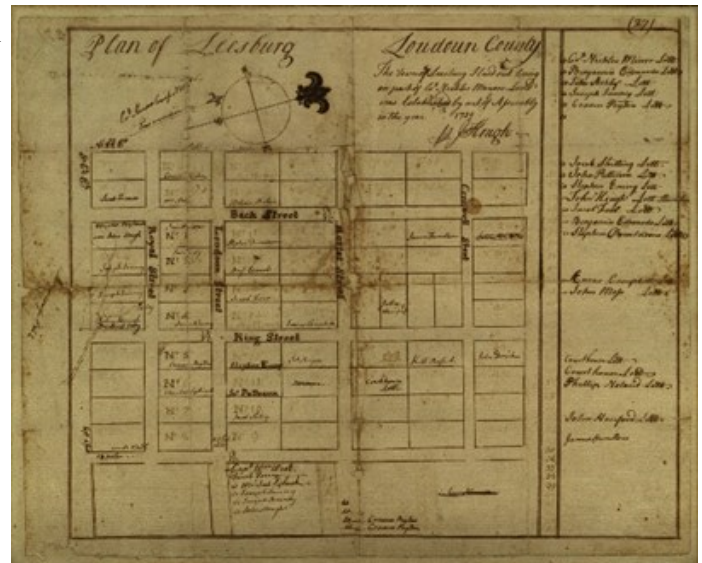
8 Hendricks, Christopher E., *The Backcountry Towns of Colonial Virginia*, Univ. Tennessee Press, 2006, 149. Nicholas Minor’s Leesburg was an example of a second generation town in the backcountry.

9 Ibid., 40 Waterford was incorporated as a town by the State of Virginia in 1836 and was un-incorporated in 1936.

10 Poland, Charles, *From Frontier to Suburbia, Loudoun County Virginia One of the Fastest Growing Counties*, Heritage Books Inc., 10

Minor picked the perfect location for a town with an east-west and north-south road network that gave the future town and surrounding communities' access to Virginia's coastal ports. Originally named George Town, the town was chartered by the House of Burgesses in September 1758. Shortly afterwards, Minor changed the town's name to Leesburg capitalizing on the Lee's influential name. In the same year, the County Justices made Leesburg Loudoun county's seat. Why Minor waited until 1761 to deed two lots to the County Justices for the courthouse is unknown.

Nicholas Minor hired surveyor John Hough to create a map of Leesburg.¹¹ The 60-acre layout by Hough was based loosely on the grid pattern, and contained seventy half-acre lots divided by three east-west streets and four streets running north-south. Although the 1759 Plan of Leesburg resembles many of the common grid designs of this time period, it also shows several inconsistencies that indicate the amateur surveyor skills commonplace in 18th century Virginia. Nicholas Cresswell, an English visitor, best described Leesburg in his 1774 journal entry: *"Indifferently built...very advantageously situated."*¹²



John Hough's Plan of Leesburg , 1758
Deed Book U-170

Leesburg had fifteen blocks that ranged in size from two-lot blocks (1 acre) to eight-lot blocks (4 acres). All the lots faced east-west except four lots that faced north-south on King Street. Leesburg streets were narrow in comparison to other towns and ranged in width from thirty-five to forty-five feet. The way the lots were numbered also suggests that Minor planned for only forty-eight lots leaving the rest of the sixty acres for future expansion, wood lots and pastures.¹³

Minor guarded his investment well by keeping other land speculators out of Leesburg. He required buyers of lots to build a 16x20 house of brick or wood within three years, or the lot would revert back to him. The House of Burgesses frequently stipulated this same rule when they chartered towns. This legal requirement protected developers like Minor from other land speculators by making them build before they could sell. In short, you couldn't buy the lot and flip it the next day for a higher price. John Poultney, for example, purchased lot two on Loudoun Street in 1758 for three pounds. In 1761, Minor sold the same lot to Benjamin Edwards after Poultney failed to build the required structure.¹⁴

By the early 19th century, many of Leesburg's half-acre lots had been sub-divided by their owners and sold or leased to the growing number of merchants and tavern keepers. In the early 1800s, land developers surveyed and laid out new lots of a half to one acre or more outside the town's 1758 boundaries. By 1835, Leesburg had a population of 1700 people, 500 dwelling houses, 22 mercantile houses, and a hotel.¹⁵ It took nearly two hundred years, but towns like Leesburg showed that Virginians recognized that towns, villages and hamlets were not a hindrance, but an extension of their land ownership and independence.

11 After being used as an exhibit in the lawsuit *Cavan vs. Murray* in 1798 the 1759 Plan of Leesburg was folded and filed with the suit papers, until it was rediscovered in 1928. John Hough was a Quaker from Pennsylvania who settled in Loudoun in 1744. He was the surveyor for the 6th Lord Fairfax and owned over thousand acres and three mills.

12 Hendricks, Christopher E., *The Backcountry Towns of Colonial Virginia*, Univ. Tennessee Press, 2006, 47

13 Ibid., 46

14 Poland, Charles, *From Frontier to Suburbia, Loudoun County Virginia One of the Fastest Growing Counties*, Heritage Books Inc., 2005, 12

15 Ibid., 72

A look at Historic Fiction By: Sarah Markel

For years people have argued over historical fiction. Some are of the idea that historical fiction is a way of taking the facts and creatively filling in the blanks to make a good story. Others believe that historical fiction bends the facts to the point that the truth is no longer recognizable, and that it does a great disservice to the public. As a former history teacher I was always of the idea that historical fiction caused more problems than good. Any teacher will tell you that students will watch the movie version of a book or time period and some of the answers you receive on the test are both funny and cringe worthy. I remember one test on the *Crucible*, when a student stated that Winona Rider accused John Proctor of witchcraft. Or, my favorite that Mel Gibson single handedly defeated the British Army.

Recently, I have started to change my mind. When historic fiction is done well and story line relatively sticks to the facts then, it can inspire a wonderful discussion about a time period or event. A current example is AMC's newest hit *Turn*. This show, based on *Washington's Spy's*, written by Alexander Rose, follows a spy ring during the Revolutionary War. In watching this show the viewer is quick to see that much of the filming was completed in Williamsburg, VA. Even though the shows creators would have you believe that the Capital Building is in Philadelphia and that the Governors Palace is in England. With these discrepancies aside this show has become a hit and has sparked a renewed interest in the Revolutionary time period.

In talking with customers about this show I was excited to hear that many of them had a renewed interest in the Revolutionary War and were taking the time to do research to find the truth about the characters and their lives. One episode, portrayed the exploits of John Champe's mission to capture Benedict Arnold. After seeing this episode I was intrigued and decided to do more research.

We all know the story of Benedict Arnold's defection from the Continental Army. However, not everyone knows that Sargent John Champe was tasked with kidnaping General Arnold, and bringing him alive to General Washington. Once delivered, Arnold was to be hanged as a traitor to make an example to all. In order for this mission to work, Champe had to pretend to defect from the Continental Army, making all but those involved in the operation think that he was a traitor. After he made it to the British lines he was to make the British believe that he was a deserter and wanted to join the legion of soldiers that Arnold was recruiting.¹



General Benedict Arnold

Champe successfully got away from the Continental lines and was able to make it into Arnolds American Legion. Once Champe was accepted into Arnold's trust his true mission could start. Champe with the help of another compatriot were set to kidnap Arnold and take him by boat to the Continental soldiers waiting for him on the New Jersey shoreline, on the night of December 11th. Plans were made to abduct Arnold as he was taking his evening stroll to the necessary (outhouse). As the night of December 11th approached Champe and his cohorts were ready to kidnap Arnold, when word came that they were to board ships and head to Virginia to destroy military supplies and stop reinforcements from reaching General Green in the Carolinas. As Champe boarded the ship he knew that the mission would have to be scrapped and he would have to figure out how to stay alive and to make it back to the Continental Lines to clear his name. After several months Champe was able to make his escape and once safely back to the Continental Lines his name was cleared by Major "Light Horse" Harry Lee, and Champe was honorably discharged from service. Champe did not want to leave military service, but Major Lee knew that if the British ever captured Champe would be tried, and die a spy's death at the end of a short rope.¹



John Champe's escape from the Continental Lines.
Image from Wikipediam.com

Growing up in Shenandoah County my teachers had not focused on this particular war hero. So, being a Loudoun County transplant, I was excited to find out that John Champe was a Loudoun County native. Champe was born in 1752 near what is now Aldie, and enlisted in the Calvary in 1776. After leaving the Continental Army he married, and was blessed with seven children. Sadly, Champe died on September 30, 1798 at Prickett's Fort while traveling. He was buried close to the fort in what is now West Virginia, but the exact location of his grave is not known.² As the location of Champe's grave has been lost to history, a stone was erected in Prickett Cemetery in Marion County, West Virginia, to honor his memory.³

Several other monuments have been placed in Loudoun County to honor the service of John Champe. In 1983 the Virginia Department of Historical Resources placed a road marker just west of Aldie giving a brief synopsis of Champe's service.⁴



Image of stone in Prickett Cemetery.
Image form Findagrave.com

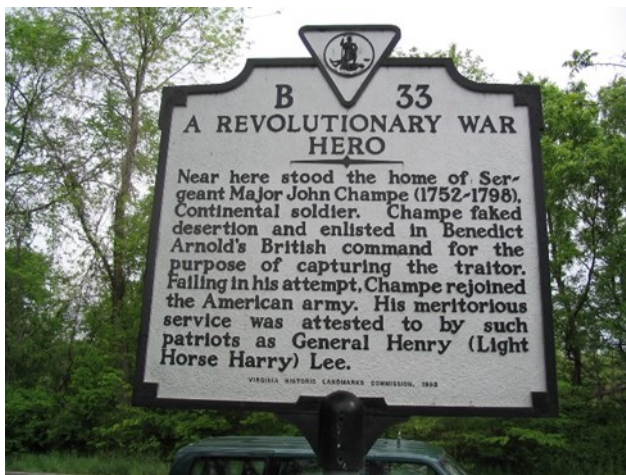


Image of Road side maker. Image from:
dhr.virginia.gov

I often wonder if people driving past these monuments, or John Champe High School, know the daring feats of this amazing war hero? Or, if seeing these monuments will spark an interest to stop and read them, or to research more about John Champe for themselves? Historical Fiction will continue to embellish the facts, but it does allow history to reach a broader audience. I think the best anyone can hope for is that this audience will be inspired to dig a little deeper. As Mark Twain once said, "Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities; truth isn't."

Near Aldie on John Mosby Highway just east of Cobb House Road there stands a stone obelisk with a plaque stating "Here was the home of Sergeant Major John Champe, Continental Army, who risked the inglorious death of a spy for the independence of his country"⁵ Local folk lore indicates that this obelisk is made from the remaining stones of Champe's house.



Image of obelisk just east of Cobb House Road
(On private Property)

1. Theobald, Mary. "'Treason is but trusted like a fox'-Shakespeare." CW Journal, Colonial Williamsburg, Summer 01, <http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/summer01/benedictarnold.cfm>

2. Wikipedia contributors. "John Champe (soldier)." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 24 Jun. 2017. Web. 26 Sep. 2017

3. Garver, Graver. "John Champe." Find A Grave. 9/26/17; VA Dept. of Historical Resources. <http://dhr.virginia.gov/HistoricMarkers/#GoToMap> 9/26/17

4. The Historical Marker Database. <https://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=737> 9/26/17



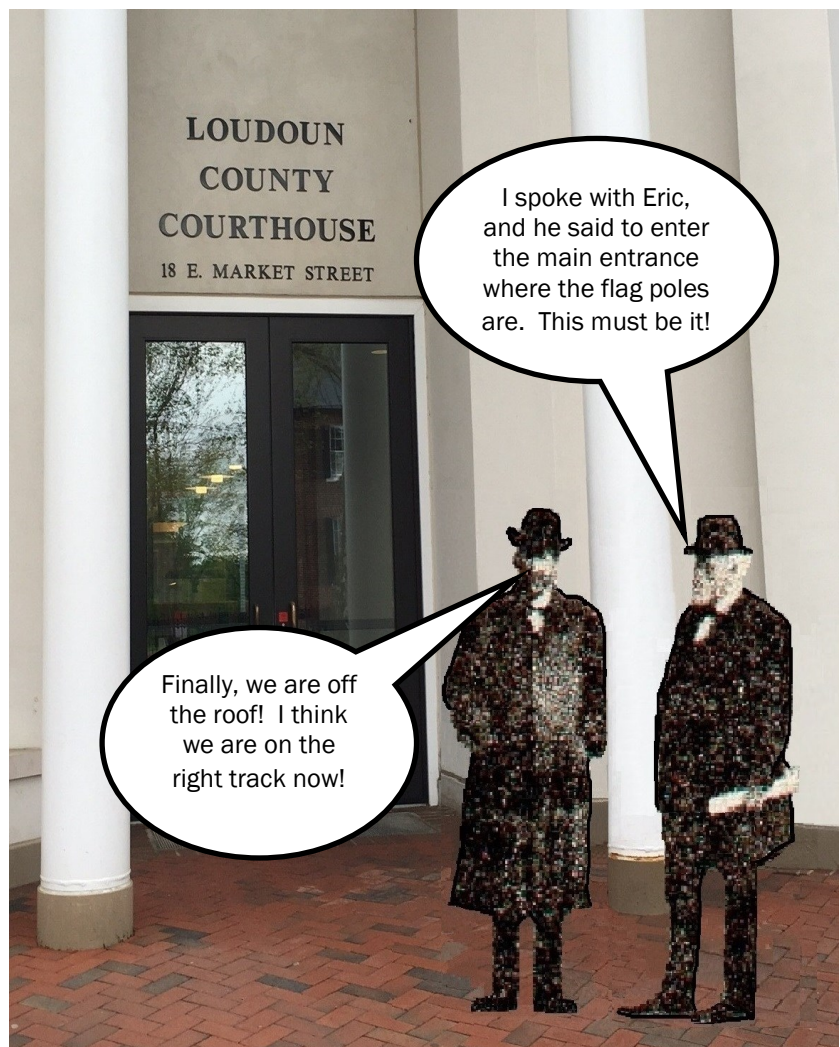
Tell us about Your “Little Gems” of Loudoun County History.

Go to www.loudoun.gov/Clerk/LittleGems and complete the “Little Gems” Form. Future editions of our newsletter will highlight a “Little Gem” submitted by our readers. So get researching, the next spotlight may be your discovery!

“Where is Archives?”

When customers arrive at the Archives front counter the first thing they say is, “Do you know that you are hidden in the basement?”

Stay tuned Archives fans for future additions of “Little Gems.” You never know where these Gentlemen’s adventures will take them next..



2018 PROGRAMS AND NEWSLETTERS

First Friday April 6, 2018-Horses, Trains, Planes and Automobiles: Transportation in Loudoun from 1757-present

This exhibition will display variety of documents from the court’s historic records that explores the evolution of Loudoun’s transportation and its impact on the county’s growth.

First Friday June 1, 2018-Preservation Act IV

Learn from Historic Records staff and volunteers how the court records are conserved and made available to the public for research. The staff will demonstrate and discuss how records are preserved in-house and with contracted conservation companies.

First Friday October 5, 2018- Tales from the Crypt-Cemeteries in Loudoun County

Historic Records partners with Thomas Balch Library to display the history of Loudoun’s public, private and family cemeteries.

2018 Newsletters

Be on the lookout in 2018 for new and exciting newsletters. If you have a topic you would like to see discussed in one of our newsletters, let us know!

All Open Houses will be held at: Court Complex 18 E. Market St. Leesburg Virginia



On September 20, 2017, the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors recognized John Fishback with a county resolution for his outstanding service and contribution to the Clerk’s Office as the former Historic Records Manager, and as a current volunteer in his retirement. John volunteers three days a week and is currently working to flat-file wills, repair land tax books, add names to the Slave and Free Black Papers, and he participates in First Friday events.